

# THE LEARNING CIRCLE



In many discussion groups, it is only the most assertive and eloquent people whose ideas get expressed. This leaves a lot of good thinking and ideas off the table.

The learning circle is a way to give everyone a chance to state their ideas on an equal footing.

Here's how it works:

1. Someone agrees to lead the circle.
2. The leader explains the rules of the learning circle:
  - a. one person will start and we will go around the circle in order
  - b. there is no cross-talk or commenting from others
  - c. if someone does not want to share when it's their turn, they say "I'll pass"
  - d. at the end, the leader will check with the people who have "passed" to see if they have something they want to share
  - e. a general discussion can occur after the learning circle has completed
3. The leader states a specific, limited question for everyone to address.
4. The leader asks who would like to start.
5. Someone offers to start and answers the question.
6. The next person either on the left or the right goes next.
7. If someone doesn't want to speak they say "I'll pass".
8. If any cross-talk or commenting occurs, the leader gently reminds people of the rules.
9. After everyone has had an opportunity to speak, the leader goes back to those who have "passed" to see if they have something they want to share.
10. The leader can conduct a general discussion after the circle has been completed.